

**Town of East Haven
Board of Finance
Special Meeting Minutes – January 2, 2013**

The East Haven Board of Finance held a Special Meeting on Wednesday, January 2, 2013 at 7:00 P.M. in the Mario Giaimo, Joseph Vitale Meeting Room on the lower level of East Haven Town Hall, 250 Main Street, East Haven, CT 06512

1. Roll Call

Board of Finance Chairman - Mr. Ralph Vitale called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm with the following Board of Finance members in attendance; Ms. Marlene Asid, Ms. Beth Purcell, Ms. Noreen Clough, Mr. Salvatore Maltese and Mr. Richard DePalma. Also present were the Director of Finance - Mr. Paul Rizza, Town Attorney - Mr. Joseph Zullo, Chief of Police- Mr. Brent Larrabee, Town Council Chairman - Mr. Richard Anania, Town Clerk - Ms. Stacy Piccirillo, Town Council Member - Ms. Beth Gravino, Town Council Member - Mr. Paul Carbo, Town Council Member - Mr. Michael Riolino, and Town Council Member - Mr. Robert Parente

2. Approve Meeting Dates for 2013

Mr. Ralph Vitale makes a motion to discuss Ms. Noreen Clough seconds. Ms. Marlene Asid asks if there would be any opposition to change the meeting time from 7:30pm to 7:00pm moving forward. Everyone agrees that 7:00pm would be ok. Attorney Joseph Zullo states that meetings can be held anytime from 7:00pm on but not earlier per the Town ordinance. Ms. Noreen Clough makes a motion to adopt the dates but amend the meeting time from 7:30pm to 7:00pm. Roll Call Vote - All in Favor – Motion Carries.

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3. East Haven Police Department

To:	01-332-0575	Clothing/Uniforms	\$4,438.00
From:	01-332-0660	Cleaning	\$2,988.00
	01-332-0682	Vet Services	\$1,000.00
	01-332-0568	Food	<u>\$ 450.00</u>
			\$4,438.00

Transfer needed to pay for body armor for 5 new police officers.

Mr. Ralph Vitale makes a motion to discuss Ms. Noreen Clough seconds. Ms. Noreen Clough asks Police Chief , Mr. Brent Larrabee if the police officers are now all on board. Chief Larrabee responds that 3 will be in the academy as of Friday and 2 of officers are on the streets already, and I should mention that I will be back for 9 more vests which will be about \$8,887 each. Ms. Marlene Asid asks how long is the life of the vest. Chief Larrabee states about 3 years. Roll Call Vote – All in Favor – Motion Carries.

4. Capital Improvements

To:	92-03-103-16	200 Tyler Street (2013)	\$35,000.00
From:	92-3-103-02	Temporary Classrooms	\$35,000.00

Creation of new account and transfer of funds for architectural and engineering fees for 200 Tyler Street (see proposal for services) Refer to Town Council.

Mr. Ralph Vitale makes a motion to discuss .Ms. Noreen Clough makes a motion to refer to the Town Council – discussion. Mr. Richard DePalma seconds. Mr. Richard DePalma asks he sees its being considered to use for grades 3 through 8 if a committee has just been established to determine if they want the building what configuration they want for the future how did we come up with a 328 in this

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plan? Mr. Rizza states he has no idea on anything other than what you have. Mr. Richard DePalma states that the committee that handles this is months away from making a decision. Mr. Rizza states they will be lucky to have a report by the end of May beginning of June – it may be even later than that. Ms. Beth Purcell asks how come only these two choices were chosen when there were 3 choices on the referendum. Mr. Rizza states again I do not have any more information than what you have – however we have 3 gentlemen here tonight that are on the committee that can answer your questions. Mr. Richard DePalma states if it were to go through the 328 – that would close 3 grammar schools and a middle school that would create 4 empty buildings for that one building. Mr. Noreen Clough asks don't we need a bid to go out for services for this kind of money? Attorney Zullo states for professional services you do not. A town is welcome to bid anything but under the town charter you do not. Mr. Salvatore Maltese asks if the committee could fill us in how we got to this figure. Town Council member Mr. Paul Carbo takes the floor and states for those of you who were not aware of what we were doing we are looking to do a feasibility study. We are not looking to make any major decisions on what is going to go into that building but more along the lines of 2 uses for the buildings. Rich you asked about the grades that was merely put in there because we do not need another high school, so we figured it would be grammar school. If you look through it is a base line – the \$35,000 is to basically get us 2 proposals to bring to the towns people to say do you want to utilize this for a school so we can retain it for education and or public use, what we want to also bring to the people to say here is what it is going to cost us – for the school – to bond this and what it is going to cost you in your taxes. That's one option, the second option, would be senior rental housing with a public use in there as well, so we can retain the pool, the gym and auditorium, because we do use those areas. If the BOE says we do not want this school we do not need it we are fine, then we can take that option that we can use it for say an art center – what we are trying to do is take the square footage what it would take to renovate it and what it would cost to make a usable building that we have to pay for. Again, the other option would be having someone else pay for it and have a lease on the property, not selling, but keeping control on the property. Our thought process on this was that every inch of the way be able to bring information to public hearings to let people

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know what is going on and in the end have two proposals and the costs and let the people vote on it. Again, it will not be a binding vote, in order to do a binding vote it has to be a true referendum and according to Attorney Zullo, you cannot have two choices in a referendum it basically has to be only one question. Giving the people of East Haven two weeks to come into the town hall – we have something in the town clerk's office so that they can cast a vote on either item one or item two. So all this is is a feasible study. If the BOE were to take the building we obviously need the BOE involved, the school building committee involved and if becomes a center for the arts then have the town involved. All Mike, Bob and I are doing is a feasibility study for the towns' people. Ms. Beth Purcell asks where is the third option. Mr. Carbo states there is no third option. Ms. Beth Purcell states the one that one the referendum is not even being presented. Mr. Carbo states we took the two highest votes on the option; the third option received the least. Ms. Purcell states that the community center got the most votes. Mr. Carbo states and this would be used as a community center if not used as a school. Ms. Purcell states that its 3 options and if it's not used a school you said it would be an art center which is not even a community center. Mr. Carbo states it would be a center for use by the town of East Haven. If it's going to be rental housing which will still give us use of a portion and that would be a mixed used and so would it be if we used it for education purposes and again if the BOE did not want to use it we could use it for an arts center or town use. Town Council member Michael Riolino states again it's a feasibility study; there has always been speculation even before I was involved what could be done with the building. We do not even know if there is asbestos in the building – this is taking one step to putting it to bed. When we had our meeting a few weeks ago, we came to the consensus that the \$35,000 was a reasonable amount of money for this study, you are the BOF and we are all tax payers in this town, but when you think about it relatively \$35,000 might not be that much money. Mr. Ralph Vitale states but were broke so \$35,000 is a lot. Mr. Richard DePalma states especially if we do not know if the BOE wants the building or not. This building has been empty for 17 years plus, what a matter of another 4 -5 months to determine if the board even wants the building or not. Mr. Carbo states the process still is that moving forward with intelligence in mind. Town Council member Mr. Robert Parente states let's say the BOE does not want the building. Mr. Richard DePalma states then why then put a dime into it. Mr. Parente we need for our own knowledge so the tax payers of this town know what

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is going to take to update all the electrical, plumbing, asbestos removed, irrelevant of the use or what is decided for the use, this program that we are asking for the \$35,000 will not have a decision made on the use of the building but just an informative way of telling everyone here at this table everyone in this town what upgrades will be needed to bring this building to code – again with no decision on what use this building will have. Mr. DePalma states but if the BOE does not take this that is the only use that gives us the greatest reimbursement for the tax payers benefit. – It's close to 70%. Mr. Parente states no you're wrong. We don't know we have not seen anything in writing on that. Mr. DePalma states other than that use I don't think the tax payers can afford anything else. Mr. Parente states at that point I it will be very clear then that we would have to bond 40 million and if we are getting back any reimbursement, I don't think the state is in any position to give us a penny at this point but if there is and we can get a commitment from them and not just someone calling Hartford but an actual paper commitment – the previous administration when they were throwing around the 65% reimbursement was only on 1/3 of that building not the entire building so there is a lot of information no one is even aware of. Mr. Carbo states (to Mr. DePalma) is that what we are trying to do here is just that we want to know what can we get back and what will it cost us – you're looking at square footage, what will it cost us to gut, even if they can use the existing walls the way they are at least someone can give us an idea of a cost to renovate. Then we this company Landmark will find out what we can get and be able to come to the towns people with some real and hard numbers and something in writing. If the towns people say no I don't want it then it their choice not ours. Right now with the building sitting there the way it is its just rotting away. Mr. Salvatore Maltese states that that building is an eye sore and it's been a problem in this town since it has closed down, its deteriorating. Mr. Parente didn't you just have a big problem there this week? Mr. Parente states yes. Mr. Maltese states I don't know how the people that live around that building can stand it the way it is. We have to do something with it and fund the money, we say were broke ok, but we do other things with money, but this is a feasible study – what else can we do – so let's do a study and bring it to the towns people to know what the cost is going to be. We have to start some place. Mr. Carbo states and

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we cannot get someone to do this for free. Mr. Maltese asks Mr. Mike Riolino if he feels the \$35,000 is reasonable price. Mr. Riolino states that it seems fair there is at least 4 months' worth of work here to be done. The town still uses this building, and we want to continue to use this building if possible. Ms. Marlene Asid state that it seems that the options are the town will still use part of this building or private. Mr. Carbo states from the rental side whoever is chosen will be doing all the renovations and the building will be put on the tax roll. Ms. Asid states that the proposal before her needs to more defined. Ms. Noreen Clough states that the 2nd paragraph on the proposal the services proposed was nine months ago – how did they get chosen (Landmark) 8 months ago when the committee was just put together a few weeks ago? Mr. Parente states that everything they have done to this point they have not charged for. Ms. Beth Purcell asks if we do not know what the usage is going to be why can't we do something less expensive and say this would be the general cost to get this building up to code whether it be a school or town used building maybe its \$15,000 and the next phase if the BOE wants it would be another \$15,000. Mr. Carbo states that he wanted to do this in two proposals one for town use and one for income use – keeping in mind of the direction of using it as rental its zero cost to the town, and we need to know what it will cost for a school or arts center. I want to be able to show two proposals. The last vote was on three and we had more votes than voters – there was a lot of confusion on that. Mr. Parente states that \$35,000 if you try to lower that to what the building needs you're just throwing away money, you need to know from the cupola to the basement what the building is going to need in bringing that building up to code for 2013 and legal. We need to have a full conception. Ms. Beth Purcell states that is my point why do we have to say what the building is going to be used for right off the bat. Mr. Parente states we are not saying what it is going to be used for we need to know how much it will take to make this building legal to code "if" it were going to be a or b. Ms. Purcell states that is not what this says; it states you're looking at it for school use or housing. Mr. Parente states these are just logical reasons of what it could be used for. Mr. DePalma states we don't know if they even want it, how many class rooms, to what degree are they going to use the building, so how can you gear it to a school if they are 4-5 months away from a decision - if they had that decision then that would give you a straighter line to work towards. Ms. Noreen Clough states reading again the product schedule it says fees for architectural if we get to phase 2 if option one is accepted for the

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School renovation we propose that architectural and school engineering design can be up to 7% of the budgeted cost. Would that be their fee? Mr. Paul Carbo states yes, but we are not signing on for phase 2 we are signing on for phase 1 only the Feasibility study. Ms. Marlene Asid asks they also state here that there is a fee to present the feasibility study? Mr. Carbo states yes if we want them to present this to the public there is a fee. Ms. Noreen Clough states it looks like phase is part of this. Mr. Rizza states that it needs to be approved by the board to move beyond the feasibility study. Mr. Carbo states for the architectural part and engineering we have the right to go out to bid on that. Mr. Rizza states how I am understanding this is that the \$35,000 is to do the feasibility study – and they will tell us what it is going to cost per square foot with what we want to do with the building. We are only tied to the \$35,000 nothing else. Attorney Zullo states that he can have Landmark clarify the proposal with phase one only. This is a big project if your concerned that phase two would be binding I can ask them to take it out. Mr. DePalma states he still has a concern that we are still 4 – 5 months out for the BOE to decide if they want the building or not. Attorney Zullo states that again tonight you are just approving a transfer of the funds and if you are making it clear that you want it re-written I can get that done. Mr. DePalma states that also this \$2000 as seed money I don't want to be transferring money after the fact to find out that the \$2,000 is long gone and we owe \$10, 15 or 20,000 because by adding this little clause that is what you are doing if giving them the ok to proceed above and beyond the \$2000. Attorney Zullo states that is not the way I read it, it states that they have to notify you. Mr. Rizza states that a specific account has been set up conducive to this project any other money requested would have to come to this board because there would be no other money but here to transfer. Mr. Parente states he suggests that the Attorney should amend the motion that the \$35,000 is a one-time deal for the services that in fact he will render and that there is not contemplation made that we are contractually bound above and beyond that. Ms. Noreen Clough asks would be it is advantageous to take one person from the board of finance and one person from the board of education and place on this committee so they at least know what is going on? Mr. Richard Anania, yes this committee would expand this was just a starting point. Attorney Zullo states from a legal stand point it was created as a sub- committee of that council but if you wanted to form a special committee you would have to make a new committee, hold separate meetings, notice requirements etc. Ms. Marlene Asid states that this \$35,000 needs to be better defined in writing. It looks like we are bound to one of these

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even though we are not it just looks that way. We need to do a feasibility study because it is just rotting away but it needs to be better defined.

Roll Call – Mr. Ralph Vitale – NO, Ms. Beth Purcell – NO, Ms. Marlene Asid – YES, Mr. Salvatore Maltese – YES, Ms. Noreen Clough – NO, Mr. Richard DePalma – NO. – Motion does not carry.

5. Adjournment

Mr. Ralph Vitale makes a motion to call the meeting to Adjournment at 7:40 pm. Ms. Noreen Clough seconds. All in Favor – Motion Carries.

Temple Smith
Board of Finance Clerk